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ASCS BACKGROUND INFORMATION



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United States Department
of Agriculture

Agricultural Stabilization and
Conservation Service

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ASCS FIELD OFFICE OPERATIONS

KANSAS CITY COMMODITY OFFICE

The Kansas City Commodity Office (KCCO) located in Prairie Village, Kansas has management responsibilities for acquisition, handling, storage and processing of commodities as required to carry out Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) program commitments. Commodities assigned to KCCO are described below:

Bulk Commodities -- Corn, soybeans, wheat, oats, barley, rye, sorghum, dry edible beans, flaxseed, rice, cotton (upland and extra long staple), cottonseed, cottonseed oil, peanuts, peanut oil, tung oil, and castor oil.

Processed Commodities -- Over 60 different processed commodities, including dairy products (butter, cheese, and dried milk), grain products (flour, corn meal, rolled wheat bulgur, rolled oats), and other fresh and processed commodities such as milled rice, oils, canned fruits and vegetables, poultry and meat.

The activities of KCCO are coordinated in Washington, D.C., under the overall policy guidance of the Administrator of ASCS, who is also Executive Vice-President of CCC. Day-to-day activity is carried out through the ASCS Deputy Administrator, Commodity Operations (DACO).

CCC is directed by its Charter to carry out its commodity operations to the fullest extent practicable by utilizing "the usual and customary channels, facilities, and arrangements of trade and commerce." Thus, KCCO utilizes storage facilities in more than 7,000 warehouses, and the services of thousands of domestic carriers, banks and other lending agencies, purchase and sales agents, vendors, processors, handlers, producer and cooperative associations, exporters, and other elements of the trade.

Sales for dollars, both for domestic and export use, are outlets for CCC-owned or controlled commodities. Other commodity programs include:

PROCUREMENT SECTION
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1. Cotton price review and vessel approval under P.L. 480, Title I.
2. Donation of available commodities to foreign countries through charitable organizations under voluntary relief agencies and the World Food Program under the Food for Peace Program (P.L. 480, Title II).
3. Purchase and shipment of commodities under various program authorities for the several domestic distribution programs. The schools under the National School Lunch Program are the largest recipients. This also includes handling all purchases made by the different commodity divisions of the Food Safety and Quality Service for these programs.
4. Sales and transfers to other U.S. Government agencies.

KCCO is divided into eight Divisions and three Branch Offices to effectively carry out the above responsibilities.

The Inventory Management Division and the Procurement and Sales Division analyze commodity availability in relation to need; acquire and dispose of commodities to meet program commitments; maintain records of inventory, acquisition, and disposal; issue shipping instructions; negotiate rates with warehouse operators for services; and serve as liaison with State, county, and Washington ASCS offices, warehouse operators, and trade groups.

The Storage Contract Division administers contracts with warehouses for storage and handling of commodities. This Division maintains lists of approved warehouses and serves as liaison between KCCO and the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) on matters relating to warehouse storage and warehouse examinations.

The Fiscal Division and the Claims and Collections Division are responsible for the financial operations engaged in by KCCO, including scheduling cash collections and allocating to applicable accounts, arranging with Federal Reserve Banks to carry out collection and disbursement functions and management of claims activities. These Divisions also serve as liaison with ASCS State, county, and Washington offices and members of the trade on claims and collections activity, fiscal examination, and settlement functions.

The Traffic Management Division participates in overall operational and program planning for transportation and traffic management. Services of this Division include arranging for transportation and related services, advising in the preparation of shipping instructions, traffic analysis, examination of charges, and certification to the Claims and Collections Division for claims arising out of this Division.

The remaining two Divisions, Management Information Division and Budget and Operations Analysis Division, work closely in the area

of design and development of computer data processing systems. The Management Information Division is concerned with the overall planning for the utilization of automated data processing (ADP) and related systems to improve operations of assigned programs. KCCO provides input data concerning its activities to the USDA central computer facilities.

The Budget and Operations Analysis Division advises and collaborates in making recommendations to adjust or modify policy and procedures due to changes in programs, organization, and data processing systems and techniques. This Division is also responsible for budget preparation and work measurement, personnel services, and other administrative activities.

KCCO maintains branch merchandising offices, which make both domestic and export sales, in Minneapolis, Minn.; Houston, Texas; and Portland, Ore. Branch Offices also allocate inbound shipments against open sales contracts or for storage commitments. In their respective areas they represent KCCO and develop and maintain liaison with the trade, ASCS State Offices and others, presenting and interpreting KCCO and ASCS-CCC policies, programs, and operating information.

Branch Offices provide advice to the merchandising and shipping trade, as well as other Government offices, by researching and reporting on market conditions, price quotations, and port activities.

Other activities include coordinating USDA export shipments through all major ports, conducting freight forwarding activities, and maintaining liaison with port authorities, custom offices, steamship companies, other governmental agencies, and private organizations as necessary on these movements.

Areas served by the branch offices are:

Portland: Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, California, Nevada, and West Coast ports

Minneapolis: Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Montana, Great Lakes and North Atlantic ports

Houston: Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Gulf Coast and South Atlantic ports

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY FIELD OFFICE

The Aerial Photography Field Office (APFO), located in Salt Lake City, Utah, provides aerial photography for ASCS and coordinates aerial photographic work for USDA; provides aerial photographic contracting and contract administration for USDA; provides aerial photographic reproductions for ASCS, other USDA agencies, other government agencies, and the public; provides data for developing policies and

procedures relating to satellite imagery in cooperation with the Departments of Commerce and Interior, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; provides satellite imagery for ASCS and other government agencies; and provides assistance in representing ASCS in Departmental and interdepartmental committees relating to remote sensing activities.

ASCS uses aerial photos to check compliance with various farm programs and conservation practices. Other government agencies and the public use aerial photos to provide visual information for urban development, planning studies, tax assessment, pollution studies, drainage programs, boundary determinations, road locations, pipeline and powerline construction, watershed and reservoir planning, and other land development projects. APFO has aerial photography which covers all of the Nation's major cropland areas amounting to 80 percent of the total land area of the United States.

Satellite imagery is provided by orbiting satellites, launched by NASA, equipped with sensors to record color images of the earth in several spectral bands. These images, in combination, are used for measuring crop production, charting forest changes, surveying for groundwater, monitoring ice and snow buildups to better predict flooding, exploring for oil and other mineral deposits, measuring land and water pollution, detecting earthquake faults, making maps, and for other purposes.

MANAGEMENT FIELD OFFICE

The Management Field Office (MFO), located in Kansas City, Missouri, is a National accounting office for the various price support and loan programs implemented through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). The office develops automated data processing (ADP) policies and standards, and provides technical direction, application and coordination of ADP systems relating to the use of computers in the administration of ASCS farm and related programs; processes and reports on ASCS and CCC financial and program operations; evaluates accounting systems; provides personnel, records management, procurement and contracting, and other administrative services for the Kansas City Commodity Office (KCCO) and other USDA offices located in Kansas City and State offices. Also serves as the operational contact point for ASCS State and county offices, Washington (D.C.) offices, and KCCO on accounting transactions, and with Federal Reserve banks and other agencies and offices.